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LETTER DATED 1 MARCH 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to draw your attention to the role played by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Iraq's unprovoked acts of aggression against various States in the Middle East, including Israel.

PLO officials have repeatedly backed Iraq's aggression and its defiance of binding Security Council resolutions, having hailed it as "the battle for Palestine". They have added their voice and arms to Iraqi efforts aimed at undermining other Arab States in the region, urging Iraq to cross the brink of war.

Casting itself as an unabashed supporter of Iraqi aggression, with renewed fervour since the start of the Gulf crisis, the PLO has exhorted Saddam Hussein to resort to the illegal use of force and to employ his arsenal of weapons of mass destruction against the civilian population of Israel.

Since 18 January 1991 Iraq has launched 39 Scud missiles at Israeli cities, causing scores of casualties and considerable damage to property.

While the international community has reacted with revulsion to these unprovoked acts of aggression against the civilian population of a country not involved in the hostilities, the PLO has responded with exuberance. This attitude, which applauds aggression, should be a cause of serious concern for States Members of the United Nations.

PLO verbal plaudits have been accompanied by action. Arafat has instructed his followers to support Saddam Hussein against the international coalition and has attempted to draw Israel into the war by calling for acts of terrorism both within Israel and throughout the world. As part of that effort, the PLO has fired scores of Katyusha rockets from Southern Lebanon and has attempted to infiltrate armed groups across Israel's boundaries. The PLO has sought to gather information on potential targets and on missile landing-sites for Iraqi intelligence. Moreover, it has contributed to the Iraqi disinformation campaign by alleging Israeli participation in the Gulf War.

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The above constitutes clear evidence as to the true character of the PLO. It is time for Governments and international organizations to draw the inevitable conclusions regarding this organization. Attached is an annex containing a selection of statements by PLO officials supporting Iraq's aggression and terrorism on its behalf.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Yoram ARIDOR
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

PLO statements in support of Iraq

I. SUPPORT FOR IRAQI AGGRESSION

Arafat:

"We now ask this question to those who inquire about the Palestinian position. We ask: Where does Israel stand in this confrontation? ... We can only be in the trench hostile to zionism and its imperialist allies." (Sawt al-Sha'b, 4 September 1990)

"I say welcome, welcome, welcome to war ... Iraq and Palestine represent a common will. We will be side by side and after the great battle, God willing, we will pray together in Jerusalem ... The Iraqi fighters and the Palestinian stone-throwers have an appointment with victory together." (The Associated Press, 7 January 1991)

Speaking of Saddam: "I am not his ally. He is my ally, he is the strongest ally to my people and their occupation." (Canadian Broadcasting Service, 7 January 1991)

"Yasir Arafat expressed the support of the Palestinian Arab people and their leadership in the face of the imperialist-Zionist aggression. He asserted that Palestine and Iraq are standing in the same trench to regain Arab rights." (Baghdad INA, 14 January 1991)

Speaking of Saddam: "Mountain, O mountain, the wind will not move you." (Monte Carlo, 30 January 1991)

"We stand alongside the Iraqi people since our struggle against the Americans and their allies is the Palestinian struggle." (Agence France Presse, 9 February 1991)

"These are fabulous days for our Arab nation, as we are witnessing the mythical steadfastness of the Iraqi people and its heroic army commanded by my knightly brother Saddam ... This is the mother of battles, waged for the mother of causes, our beloved Palestine." (Algiers, Voice of Palestine, 11 February 1991)

On 25 February Arafat sent a message of support to Saddam Hussein following the launching of the ground offensive against Iraq.

In it, Arafat pays tribute to "the fight of the people and the army of Iraq against American hegemony and dictatorship."

"In this historic and crucial moment for our nation," declares the chief of the PLO, "I pray for your victory and promise you the support of our people, who fight the same war to protect the honour, nobility, security and existence of our nation." (Agence France Presse, 25 February 1991)

Farouk Kaddoumi ("Foreign Minister"):

"We Palestinians are 100 per cent behind Iraq against the American aggression." (Die Presse, Vienna, 31 January 1991)

Hani al-Hassan (Arafat's chief political adviser):

"We have coordinated our plans to fight with Iraq in one trench." (The Associated Press, 12 December 1990)

Excerpts from PLO Executive Council statement:

"We call today for a firm stand ... on the side of the steadfast and combatant Iraq in the confrontation of the American-Zionist-Atlantic aggression ... The PLO calls on all the peoples of our nation and its dynamic forces to participate in the battle of confronting the American and allied aggression ... The PLO extends a salute of military brotherhood to the steadfast people of Iraq and its militant President Saddam Hussein and the valiant Iraqi army ..." (Algiers, Voice of Palestine, 29 January 1991)

II. SUPPORT FOR IRAQI MISSILE ATTACKS AGAINST ISRAEL

Arafat:

Addressing a public rally in Baghdad on 29 March 1990, while standing beside Saddam Hussein, Arafat declared that both leaders would enter Jerusalem victoriously, with Saddam mounted on a white horse, fighting Israel with stones, rifles and the "El-Abed" - Iraq's long-range missiles. (The Associated Press, 29 March 1990)

"The Iraqi military will resort to its chemical and biological weapons and the first missile will be directed at Israel." (Reuters, 5 November 1990)

"The Palestinian stone in Jerusalem has turned into that binary missile in Baghdad." (Algiers, Voice of Palestine, 31 December 1990)

"The Palestinian stones in Jerusalem would become chemical missiles from Baghdad." (Baghdad, Voice of Palestine, 31 December 1990)

"We will answer the Zionist enemy and say to him in 1991: a land without the Israeli or Zionist people. This land is Arab, Arab, Arab, Palestinian in her face and Arab in her heart ... The holy Palestinian stone in the hand of the Palestinian child will turn into the binary missile - this is a symphony." (Baghdad Television, 31 December 1990)

The Iraqi missiles "took the air out of the Israeli balloon." (Al-Houriyyah, Reuters, 23 January 1991)

Abu Iyad (Arafat's second in command):

"What they need is a missile that will put them in their place." (Al-Dustur, 2 January 1991)

Farouk Kaddoumi:

"Kaddoumi does not regret Iraqi missile attacks against Israel: 'When someone fights our enemy, we are pleased'" (Vienna Domestic Service, 31 January 1991)

Hawatimah (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)):

"The Iraqi bombardment of Israel is a real wedding and the punishment for Zionist aggression." (Arab Voice of Lebanon, 20 January 1991)

"DFLP today hailed the Iraqi missile attack on Israel. Hawatimah said that this action calls for celebration by the Palestinians." (Radio Monte Carlo, 20 January 1991)

"Hawatimah described the launching of the Iraqi missiles at Tel Aviv as a cause of 'real rejoicing' for the Palestinians." (Al-Ahali, Egypt, 22 January 1991)

"When they say that the missiles that fall on Israeli towns fall on populated areas, we would say: it is a tit for tat ... We all must have seen ... how the Algerian youth called out in one voice: 'O beloved Iraq, strike, strike Tel Aviv'. In saying this, they speak for all peoples ..." (Algiers Radio, 29 January 1991)

Habash (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)):

"Iraq has restored its credibility by launching missiles against Israel, causing great satisfaction among the ranks of the Palestinian people." (Voice of the Mountain, 20 January 1991)

"PFLP said that by pounding Tel Aviv and other Zionist colonialist gatherings, Iraq has carried out the promises it issued before the war. This resulted in great relief among the Palestinian people's ranks." (Baghdad Domestic Service, 20 January 1991)

Abu al-Abbas (PFLP):

"Our masses in the occupied homeland have seen the enemy's forces trembling with fear and rushing to shelters to escape the Iraqi missiles, which crushed the heads of the Zionist occupiers ... Palestine will, God willing, be liberated. Today, the missiles of Iraq reached Tel Aviv. Tomorrow, the march of the believers will reach holy Jerusalem." (Baghdad Domestic Service, 19 January 1991)

Abbas Zaki Mazid (PLO Central Committee member):

"For the first time in history Tel Aviv has been bombarded and an Arab leadership has proven by a premeditated action that al-Hussein missiles reach Tel Aviv and all strategic targets in the Zionist entity. Shamir and all the arrogant forces were struck with fear and are totally impotent in the face of the fabulous steadfastness and tremendous combat capability of the secret Iraqi cavalry ... You have given the Palestinian people the most beautiful gifts ... The al-Hussein missiles constitute the most important gift in this dark era." (Baghdad Radio, 8 February 1991)

Muhammad Jihad (PLO official responsible for military affairs in Jordan):

"We are happy about the Scud missile attacks on Israel." (Berlin, Der Morgen, 30 January 1991)

Yasser Abd Rabbo (PLO Executive Committee member):

"... said Iraq has the right to attack Israel, as it is one of the parties in the confrontation. When asked about the firing of Iraqi missiles against Israel he praised the action." (French, British news agencies, 20 January 1991)

"The missiles have toppled the myth of the Israeli security barrier." (Baghdad Radio, 8 February 1991)

"Palestinian sources in South Lebanon said the purpose of the Katyusha attack was to do 'what the Iraqi Scuds had not yet succeeded in doing: to drag Israel into the Gulf war. When the Israelis react with fire, we shall turn this into an Israeli-Arab war'. The sources reported that Arafat has ordered the attack 'to defend innocent people in Iraq.'" (Agence France Presse, 29 January 1991)

III. FALSE ALLEGATIONS AS TO ISRAEL'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR

Arafat:

"I have information that Israel has been totally implicated in the war from the start ... Some of their planes participate in the attacks ... Moreover, there are missiles used by the Israeli Army from the Negev desert near Dimona against the western part of Iraq." (Paris Antenne-2 Television Network, 29 January 1991)

"Who said that Israel is not participating? Israel is taking part with its aircraft, its aircraft are deployed alongside United States aircraft at a number of bases ... there is now shelling from the Negev. The United States is covering this up and saying that submarines deployed in the Red Sea are doing the shelling. This is not correct. The shelling is originating from surface-to-surface missile launchers in the Negev." (Radio Monte Carlo, 30 January 1991)

Yasser Abd Rabbo:

Claimed that Israel, since the beginning of the war, has deployed aircraft in Turkish bases. (Agence France Presse, Reuters, 20 January 1991)

PLO representative in Mexico:

"Israel brought hundreds of Palestinians to the Israeli nuclear centre in the Negev so that they can serve as 'human shields' against a possible Iraqi missile attack." (Uno Más Uno, 1 February 1991)

Bassam Abu-Sharif (adviser to Yasser Arafat):

"The B-52 bombers are being drawn from bases in Britain, Spain, Diego Garcia and Israel." (Reuters, 4 February)

"Abu-Sharif said the stationing of Patriot missiles in Israel was proof that Israel is now 'part of the war'." (Monte Carlo, 21 January 1991)

IV. TERRORISM IN SUPPORT OF IRAQ

Yasser Arafat is supplying the Iraqi intelligence services with hundreds of Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan passports to assist the Iraqis in attacking American and other targets. (Rhein-Pfalz, 22 January 1991)

Hawatimah:

Each and every Arab people is called upon to besiege and strike at United States, British, and French interests wherever their hands can reach." (Algiers Radio, 29 January 1991)

George Habash:

"The Palestinian fedayeen will strike Western targets hostile to Iraq." (Radio Monte Carlo, 31 January 1991)

Muhammad Jihad:

"The PLO has stated that it will support Iraq all it can in order to face the United States-Israeli aggression. This means an armed fight against our enemy Israel, with guns, bombs and knives." (Berlin, Der Morgen, 30 January 1991)

Yasser Abd Rabbo:

"The Palestinian fighters who launched an attack today against a convoy of the Israeli enemy in the heart of the Negev near the Dimona reactor are not only brothers-in-arms to the Iraqi fighters on the front, but share one destiny with her. Together, the Palestinian and Iraqi rifles are conducting the battle for the national destiny." (Baghdad Radio, 8 February 1991)

Abd al-Rahim Ahmad (PLO Executive Committee member):

"We urge the masses of our Arab nation and the Muslims to expand the theater of confrontations over the whole world. They must strike violently all United States interests and institutions everywhere." (INA, 22 January 1991)

Zayid Wahbah (PLO representative in Lebanon):

"When the shooting begins on Iraqi forces, the Palestinian forces will attack American interests in Palestine, outside Palestine and around the world." (Voice of the People, 14 January 1991)

"We'll act from Lebanon, Amman, Cairo and Damascus and orders have been given to fighters to prepare to attack United States and British interests around the world." (Agence France Presse, 16 January 1991)

"Zayid Wahbah called for attacking the interests of the coalition members and fighting the United States and Israel under the leadership of the president of Iraq." (Reuters, 27 January 1991)

V. THE PLO IN LEBANON: OPENING A SECOND MISSILE FRONT AGAINST ISRAEL

"Palestinian sources have said that Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat has called on the Palestinians in Lebanon to fight on the side of Iraq if a war breaks out in the Gulf. Palestinian sources also said that approximately 6,000 Palestinian fighters in the Sidon area have been placed on high alert." (Voice of Lebanon, 14 January 1991)

Arafat:

Concerning firing rockets at Israel, Arafat said, "It is our legal right" (Radio Monte Carlo, 30 January 1991)

Hawatimah:

"I call upon all PLO detachments to join the national Lebanese forces in the carrying out of fedayeen operations against the Zionist occupation forces in Southern Lebanon so that we can divert the largest possible power of the Israeli Army away from the battlefront with Iraq. I call on all PLO detachments ... to join in the fedayeen operations in Southern Lebanon and in the heart of Israel so that we prevent the Israeli forces from having a free hand ..." (Algiers Radio, 28 January 1991)

"DFLP ... called for clashing with and using arms against the Israeli enemy whenever possible and urged all the Palestinian fighters in Southern Lebanon to ... confront the Israeli enemy with arms and fire in order to open a new front with the enemy forces and zionism." (Amman, Al-Ra'y, 29 January 1991)

Zayid Wahbah:

"Zayid Wahbah has threatened that the PLO will shell deep inside Israel if the international alliance continues its raids on Iraqi civilians and installations. Wahbah said: Do not forget that we are struggling alongside Iraq, and that Southern Lebanon is an open front to contribute to the defence of Iraq." (Voice of Lebanon, 28 January 1991)

"Wahbah told AFP on 28 January that the PLO military forces are ready to launch attacks and bombardments deep inside Israel, if the bombardment of Iraqi civilians and institutions continues ... He added that one should not forget the PLO is fighting on the side of Iraq, and South Lebanon is an open front ... He called on the other Arab States bordering on Israel to fulfil their obligation and strike the Israeli enemy in order to thwart the destruction of Iraq ... these countries should enable Palestinian and Arab fighters to join in the battle from their own fronts." (Agence France Presse, 28 January 1991)

"We will respond to the attacks against Iraq by hitting targets inside Israel ... we view ourselves as part of the campaign in the Gulf." (Reuters, 29 and 30 January 1991)

Saher Habash (PLO Executive Committee member):

"The Fatah bases, the Palestinian resistance and the Lebanese national resistance front in Southern Lebanon have opened a front in South Lebanon against the Zionist enemy, in support of the just Arab front which Iraq is defending. This front will be an effective armed front in support of Iraq. He called for the opening of another front against the Zionist enemy from the Syrian-Palestinian border." (Al-Jumhuriya, Iraqi News Agency, 1 February 1991)

"In Sidon in Southern Lebanon, a PLO spokesman affirmed that Palestinian fighters shelled four settlements in northern Israel at dawn today. He indicated that 80 Grad projectiles were fired at the settlements of Metulla, Misgav Am, Kefar Gil'adi, and Nahariya." (Radio Monte Carlo, 29 January 1991)

"Palestinian sources in South Lebanon have announced the establishment of a unified military command embracing all Palestinian organizations to coordinate military action and open a front against Israel in South Lebanon to support Iraq." (Voice of Lebanon, 5 February 1991)

"A member of the PLO military leadership in Lebanon, Lt. Cl. Amran, said that Arafat and the PLO command gave instructions to increase the struggle against Israel in response to her military cooperation in the Gulf ... He said: 'The implementation of the instructions has already begun with the bombardment of a number of Zionist settlements in the Galilee ...'" (Agence France Presse, 29 January 1991)

"The PLO spokesman said the PLO has decided to carry out qualitative operations and escalate the armed struggle against Israel in solidarity with Iraq." (Free Lebanon Radio, 4 February 1991)